

2016 Vol. 7 No. 2

MCU Journal



Published by Marine Corps University Press

Asking the Right Questions

A Framework for Assessing Counterterrorism Actions

Jonathan Schroden, William Rosenau, and Emily Warner

Abstract: Since the 9/11 attacks, America has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time, money, and effort to countering terrorism. It has devoted, however, comparatively little effort to developing rigorous and useful assessment frameworks to help policy makers and practitioners understand how effective these counterterrorism (CT) actions have been. To address this shortfall, this article first identifies and characterizes today's prevailing terrorism theories and their associated CT actions. For each theory, an assessment framework is created consisting of specific questions that help gauge the success or failure of CT actions and indicators that could be used to answer those questions. These assessment frameworks, which rigorously link policy to practice, should enable CT practitioners to provide policy makers and commanders direct and actionable feedback on whether the approaches chosen are having the expected impact.

Keywords: terrorism, counterterrorism, CT, assess, assessment, evaluation, M&E, theory, framework, policy, operations

The United States has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time, money, and effort to countering terrorism since the attacks on 11 September 2001.¹ Yet, for all the emphasis on counterterrorism (CT) operations and other U.S. government programs designed to prevent, to deter, or to count-

Dr. Jonathan Schroden is the director of CNA's Center for Stability and Development, which focuses on issues of terrorism/counterterrorism and assessing the effectiveness of U.S. government actions, among other topics. Schroden also directs CNA's Special Operations Program. Dr. William Rosenau is a senior analyst and policy historian at CNA who has written extensively and advises senior U.S. government officials on issues of counterterrorism. Emily Warner is an analyst at CNA with extensive experience in intelligence and counterterrorism activities. She is currently on assignment with the I Marine Expeditionary Force.

MCU Journal vol. 7, no. 2

Fall 2016

www.usmcu.edu/mcupress

<https://doi.org/10.21140/mcu.j.2016070204>

er terrorism worldwide, the United States has devoted comparatively little effort to rigorously linking its actions to theories of terrorism/CT or to logically deriving indicators that could be used to assess how effective those actions have been.² The literature on terrorism/CT theory is robust, but policy makers are often unclear as to which theories they use to craft policy. As illustrated in this article, the literature on CT assessment is much less robust and many of the articles that discuss specific metrics or means of assessing CT operations do so in the absence of linkages to theories of terrorism and CT.

Because of the general absence of linkages between the “why” (theories) of terrorism/CT, the “how” (actions), and the “what to measure” (metrics), the latter are often ill-suited to address whether theories and their associated actions are successfully practiced. In essence, a standard quantitative metric, such as the number of terrorist incidents over time, is easy to compute but difficult to interpret without context, an inherent baseline for comparison, and a clear, unambiguous linkage to a specific theory of terrorism/CT.³ This mismatch can and often does result in miscommunications between policy makers, practitioners, and broader audiences, such as the media and general public, as to why certain CT actions are being employed and whether they are achieving desired outcomes. Worse, it has the potential to result in ineffective or counterproductive decision making by policy makers and practitioners, since the assessments they receive may not be linked to the explicit or implicit theories guiding their actions.

In this article, we will develop and present a logical and comprehensive framework for linking theories of terrorism and their associated actions to indicators that could be used to assess U.S. government CT actions and programs. Specifically, we will answer the following questions as they pertain to the practice and assessment of countering terrorism. What is the current state of CT assessment and why is a new approach needed? What are the predominant theories of terrorism today? What types of actions are most associated with each theory for countering terrorism? What questions would need to be answered to know whether these actions are successfully addressing terrorism as predicted by theory? What specific pieces of data and information (indicators) would need to be gathered and analyzed to answer those questions?⁴ These are difficult questions to answer, and definitively doing so is not possible in the space available in this forum. By providing an initial set of responses as a proof of concept of what a comprehensive, theory-derived assessment framework might look like for countering terrorism, we hope to provide a starting point for CT policy makers and practitioners interested in more rigorous approaches to assessing their policies and actions. We also hope to stimulate a broader and more rigorous discussion of the theories, the actions, the questions, and the indicators for countering terrorism and assessing U.S. performance and outcomes.

Our approach to answering the above questions parallels the organization of this article.⁵ First, we examine the literature on assessment of counterterrorism actions to highlight the lack of an effective approach and to motivate the creation of a new one. Second, we summarize bodies of research from both the academic and operational worlds to identify the most common theories of why groups or individuals engage in terrorism. Third, we identify the actions these theories suggest are most appropriate for countering terrorism in its various forms. Fourth, we use literature research, discussions with subject matter experts, and a logical reductionist approach to identify the questions that would need to be answered to know whether each theory's associated actions are effective in practice. Fifth, we use a similar approach to identify the indicators that would be used to answer these questions of effectiveness. We conclude the article with a brief discussion of how our preliminary CT assessment framework might be implemented and improved upon going forward.

The State of Counterterrorism Assessment

When considering the literature on CT assessment, it is helpful to divide the research into four major bodies by identifying the underlying motivation or starting point for each author's approach. In the first body, a relatively small number of authors examine and assess specific CT operations that have taken place in the past. The indicators that they use may be explicitly stated or implied, but these authors typically conclude their discussions with a final determination of the specific operation's success or failure.

The remaining bodies, which constitute the vast majority of the literature, examine the topic of CT assessment itself and typically highlight faults in past approaches. These publications roughly fall into one or two of three broad categories depending on whether they see CT assessments as being based on (1) method or process, (2) political dynamics or policy, or (3) theory or concept. The first category is the dominant one, as most authors approach CT assessment with the intent to improve the effectiveness of CT methods. The most common manifestation of this type of work identifies past errors in CT assessment and an original (or at least partially original) set of metrics, measures, indicators, or approaches. Other authors point to political dynamics and policy decisions as the origins of faulty CT assessments. These writers often cite a lack of clear policy goals or shifting strategies to account for deficiencies in assessment. Some of these authors offer recommendations for improvements, but not all do so. Finally, there are those who identify a more fundamental issue: one cannot conduct a CT assessment with integrity without first articulating an understanding of what terrorism is on a theoretical or conceptual basis. This final category is less common than work that emphasizes methods and metrics alone. Consequently, CT assessment methods often begin with a series of un-

identified or unarticulated assumptions that drive the focus and development of the method. We will explore specific examples from each of the four bodies of literature in the next section.

Assessments of Past CT Efforts

The literature includes several examples of CT assessments that examine a specific operation and offer analysis and commentary on its effectiveness. These assessments are useful because they implement the process of CT assessment, rather than simply describing it. Some are stronger than others in offering the explicit criteria and methods used in their assessments, but all benefit from being confined to a specific instance of CT actions, which helps bound the problem. These examples tend to argue that CT assessment has no one-size-fits-all approach. Rather, they suggest that assessments must be tailored to the specific operation of interest.

The subject of one CT assessment that uses the number of attacks as a primary indicator for success or failure, for example, is CT operations against the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland. Authors Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, and Raven Korte understand these numbers in terms of deterrence or backlash, where CT operations that reduce the risk of future terrorist acts represent deterrence and those that increase that risk correspond to a backlash.⁶ The authors ultimately conclude that terrorist interventions in Northern Ireland more often resulted in backlash than in deterrence, highlighting that CT operations have the potential to decrease or increase terrorist activity depending on specific conditions.

Author Nadav Morag examines a common subject of CT assessment: Israel and its neighbors. He uses seven parameters—human life, economic impact, political impact, internal stability, international standing, economic power, and the ethical component—to study the effectiveness of Israeli CT efforts.⁷ Of note in Morag’s method is his statement that “a truly scientific and unassailable analysis” of CT effectiveness is unachievable, so he offers a general idea of Israeli success.⁸ This balance between the art and science of CT assessment is a fairly common theme, with many authors emphasizing a balance between qualitative and quantitative methods when approaching the complex problem of gauging the effectiveness of CT operations.

A final, representative example demonstrates how authors have examined tactics instead of specific groups or locations to assess effectiveness. Michele Malvesti looks at the effectiveness of air strikes as a CT tool, focusing on a few examples—Libya, Iraq, and Osama bin Laden—and attempting to determine whether air strikes resulted in or contributed to the desired outcome.⁹ Malvesti asks three questions to build her conclusions. Was terrorism prevented? Were the perpetrators held accountable? And were critical nodes destroyed? Based

on this loose set of criteria, Malvesti concludes that air strikes are generally not an effective tool for countering terrorism.¹⁰

Method Focused

Most of the literature on CT assessment focuses on methods or processes used to evaluate CT actions. Authors often acknowledge the insufficiency of current methods, pointing to pervasive issues, such as problematic metrics (e.g., body counts), data challenges, and the lack of clear objectives. The most comprehensive review of past methods comes from authors Cynthia Lum, Leslie Kennedy, and Alison Sherley in their 2006 publication, *The Effectiveness of Counter-Terrorism Strategies*, a systematic review of more than 20,000 studies on the subject that found CT assessments with “moderately strong evaluation designs” in only seven studies.¹¹ Five of the seven subjects related to measuring the effectiveness of efforts ensuring the safety of airline passengers from would-be terrorist attacks (i.e., preventing skyjackings and providing airport security). These studies also used data that were more easily quantifiable than data sets found in other CT assessments.¹² Despite the comprehensiveness of the 2006 study, the authors did not offer concrete alternative methods that avoid the pitfalls of past approaches.

Similarly, Teun Walter van Dongen, an independent security expert, lays out a myriad of problems with current approaches to CT assessment in two publications. In 2009, the author identifies problems with attributing metrics, such as the numbers of terrorist attacks and actual victims, to the correct cause and points out that, ultimately, reduced numbers may not reflect progress.¹³ Instead, van Dongen recommends breaking success into its components and establishing a causal chain for each component. The list of components, or *success factors*, includes international cooperation, intelligence gathering, and a counternarrative to terrorism.¹⁴ In 2015, van Dongen also identified problematic metrics; failure to account for second- and third-order effects or counterbalancing setbacks that occur concurrent with progress; and general challenges associated with establishing causality in CT assessment; however, a viable alternative approach was not provided.¹⁵

Other treatments of CT assessment do, however, offer critical insight by focusing on alternatives to current methods and defending their validity and value. Some of the authors emphasize the merits of borrowing from other fields where similar work has been done. Anthony Ellis et al., for example, point to the potential application of monitoring and evaluation tools used in the development arena to CT assessment. The approach would bring in qualitative inputs, including the results of interviews and focus groups, and quantitative inputs resulting from applied new technologies.¹⁶ Other authors, including Gentry White et al., highlight the potential uniquely found in quantitative ap-

proaches, proposing a self-exciting point process model, which posits that the occurrence of an event increases the probability of another future event with the rate of increase diminishing over time.¹⁷ The authors used this model to study responses to terrorist events in Southeast Asia with results that reveal varying levels of CT effectiveness across the region. The authors recommend that these results be compared with expert assessments to help validate the method, making the implicit acknowledgment that quantitative methods alone do not suffice in building CT assessments.¹⁸

Some of the literature critical of current approaches to CT assessment does go so far as to offer alternative metrics in an attempt to move this debate forward. Edward F. Mickolus, a former CIA agent who writes extensively about CT, compares the merits of event- and group-based approaches to measuring CT effectiveness, ultimately encouraging the use of the latter.¹⁹ Event-based approaches measure things such as the numbers of terrorist incidents, whereas group-based methods emphasize the importance of terrorist behavior and include such metrics as group size, leadership, ties to other groups, ideologies, weapons, and tactics.²⁰

While some authors try to balance the need for both qualitative and quantitative methods, other authors on CT assessment bridge the gap between method-focused and policy-focused approaches, dedicating time to discussing the value and failings of both. The work of Alex P. Schmid and Rashmi Singh illustrate this balance by offering a broad set of hard and soft indicators that focused on the post-9/11 effort to counter al-Qaeda. While hard indicators focused on increases or decreases of quantitative factors (e.g., the number of al-Qaeda affiliate groups, sophistication of attacks, or recruits compared with losses), soft indicators focused on the qualitative information (e.g., perceptions of local populations toward al-Qaeda). The authors base this need for better indicators on problems with past metrics and on policy problems, such as the lack of clear objectives.²¹

Policy Focused

Another group of work on CT assessment has emerged with a more political approach that emphasizes the values, or more often the shortcomings, of CT strategy and policies. In one examination of the U.S. strategy for the Global War on Terrorism, author Harlan Ullman lists five shortfalls, called *unfinished business*, which reveal the lack of progress in the war on terror.²² These five items include the United States' failure to understand the nature of threats to national security; operation under dysfunctional organizations; the shift from a threat of massive destruction to one of massive disruption; failure to modernize and build alliances; and lack of a strategy addressing underlying causes.

Even more frequently than Ullman, Daniel Byman has written fairly consistently on the topic of CT assessment since 2001. While Byman's work touches on all three categories—method, policy, and theory—he focuses on the political underpinnings that influence measures of CT success. The proposed metrics often include such factors as cost, policy impact, and domestic and international support for CT efforts.²³ Byman also points to the inflation that can occur when the U.S. government touts its CT successes, due in part to the weakness of the metrics used.²⁴

Theory Focused

Publications that fall into the theory-focused category identify a more fundamental problem in conducting CT assessments—the lack of a theoretical or conceptual grounding of CT policies and actions on which an assessment can be built. Michael Stohl expresses this problem succinctly by highlighting the “failure to ground metrics in a theoretical understanding of the problem.”²⁵ He points to the over politicization of CT, which has resulted in far more political—rather than scholarly—approaches to assessment. Stohl offers metrics that move away from quantitative measures such as the number of incidents; instead, he emphasizes audience reactions to a terrorist act and how the act affects dynamics such as human rights. Alexander Spencer, an international relations scholar, takes a similar tack by highlighting the inherent weaknesses of a rationalist approach to measuring CT, including an overreliance on quantitative measures. Instead, Spencer recommends a constructivist approach that accounts for fear, consumer confidence, domestic and international support, and public opinion.²⁶

Additionally, Eric van Um and Daniela Pisoiu identify problems in CT assessment using the critical analysis of international relations theory.²⁷ They identify a *theoretical underdevelopment* in the way analysts have approached CT assessment in the past, particularly when it comes to determining attribution or causation.²⁸ To mitigate this problem, the authors propose explicitly stating which of three categories an assessment falls into—output effectiveness (the behavior of those doing CT); outcome effectiveness (the behavior of policy makers and the targeted group); or impact effectiveness (the impact on a target audience).²⁹

The State of Assessment Is Weak

The significant debate as to the most appropriate ways to assess the effectiveness of CT actions is evident when looking across the literature on CT assessments. As we have observed in the literature on other related topics (i.e., counterinsurgency), much of this debate centers on what the right *metrics* for

assessment should be. But, because relatively few examinations of CT assessment begin by identifying the CT theories that underpin the approach or approaches used, much of the literature presupposes or infers that a particular theory is true. This tendency often leaves the argument as to the validity of a proposed assessment approach unbounded and ungrounded. The proposed indicators that many authors present may indeed be worthy of consideration, but their validity as representations of a thorough and deliberate examination of CT assessment comes into question if they are derived from an unclear, or at least unarticulated, theoretical starting point. The demonstration of a possible, rigorous, logically derived CT assessment framework begins with an identification of the predominant CT theories of the day.

Theoretical Foundations of Counterterrorism

To elucidate how to assess the effectiveness of CT approaches, the five prominent theories that explain the phenomenon of terrorism must first be identified and made explicit. A brief summary of each theory—ideology, root causes, state sponsorship, rational choice, and group dynamics—introduced in this section includes a discussion of associated key components, assumptions, illustrative examples, and activities associated with each theory.

To be clear, this group of five theories is not intended to be historically comprehensive. Some theoretical approaches, such as psychopathology, were prominent in the 1970s when the field of terrorism studies was emerging, but have since fallen out of favor among specialists.³⁰ Over time, new theories are likely to be developed. As a result, the discussion below should be viewed as a snapshot of the current state of thinking on terrorism and CT. As well, the boundaries between the five theories are necessarily fuzzy; for example, small-group dynamics and rational choice can overlap, and some state sponsorship and ideology adherents point to Baathist Iraq as a prime mover in both spheres. Subscribing to more than one theory simultaneously, therefore, is possible and reasonable given the range of positions and viewpoints among proponents of each theory.

While these categories might not speak to past theoretical approaches, these five schools of thought could be used for any future theories of terrorism. Additionally, the assessment frameworks described below are not seen as mutually exclusive. Questions and indicators may be selected from within each school of thought to generate a blended framework that spans multiple theories. More important, effective CT assessments ensure that a theory or theories are chosen and made explicit before CT actions or programs begin so that appropriate questions can be asked and indicators can be gathered at the outset of new initiatives.

Ideology (Jihadism)

At the foundation of the theoretical approach focused on ideology is the notion that certain systems of belief drive individuals to engage in terrorist activities. Specific ideologies that have been the focus of attention in the past include Communism in the decades of the Cold War and *ethnonationalism* in the 1970s and 1980s. Today, a militant, militarized, and politicized Islam, also known as *jihadism*, is the ideological engine most commonly cited for powering the most dangerous terrorist threats to the United States specifically and the West generally. The view of those espousing a *jihadist* theory of terrorism is that jihadists are deeply and indeed inevitably opposed to Western civilization, as evidenced by their quest for the reestablishment of the caliphate, the imposition of sharia law, and the spread of a reformed and purified Islamic faith.³¹

In the view of writer Paul Berman, a leading proponent of the jihadist theory of terrorism, militant Islam is a form of totalitarianism that draws on an ideational wellspring shared by communism, fascism, and Nazism where “People throw themselves into campaigns of murder and suicide because they have come under the influence of malign doctrinal systems, which appear to address the most profound and pressing of human problems—and do so by openly rebelling against the gravest of moral considerations.”³²

Jihadists engage in a total, protracted war against those they consider the enemies of Islam—a Manichean struggle that will only end with the total Western withdrawal from “occupied” Muslim lands and the destruction of Israel.³³ As such, jihadism represents an “ideology of conquest” and a “significant threat to America,” according to Richard Perle and David Frum, two prominent early advocates for the post-9/11 “War on Terror.”³⁴ Like Britain confronting the *armed doctrine* of the French Revolution, this school of thought argues that the West faces a comparable ideological challenge today.³⁵

For many who subscribe to the jihadist theory of terrorism, the use of military force is first among equals, but not the only counterterrorist instrument in their repertoire. Countering extremist ideology, promoting the spread of democracy and human rights, and maintaining a broad political coalition against jihadism all have their place, but these are secondary. Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and other named and unnamed military campaigns have had two objectives. The first was to degrade and destroy Islamist armed groups, and in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan, the regimes that supported them. The second aim was to produce a powerful demonstration effect designed to signal to potential state and nonstate aggressors that the United States would commit its overwhelming military might to eliminating anti-Western terrorism.³⁶

Root Causes

Central to the root causes theory is the tenet that economic, social, political, and environmental conditions enable, contribute to, and perhaps have a causal relationship with terrorism. At the very least, sociopolitical conditions, such as poverty, relative and absolute inequality, and the lack of political freedom, create a climate amenable to exploitation by terrorists. In a February 2015 speech, President Barack H. Obama highlighted links between terrorism and various social, political, and economic ills: “The link is undeniable. When people are oppressed and human rights are denied—particularly along sectarian lines or ethnic lines—when dissent is silenced, it feeds violent extremism. It creates an environment that is ripe for terrorists to exploit.”³⁷ For their part, terrorism theorists generally argue that such conditions are insufficient to lead to terrorism. Terrorism also requires grievances, political or otherwise, and what one specialist refers to as “precipitant factors—such as leadership, funding, state sponsorship, [and] political upheaval [that] form essential intervening variables.”³⁸ Scholars also point to so-called trigger causes, which are described as events or situations that provoke or entice people to engage in terrorist actions.³⁹ An example is Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s visit in 2000 to the Temple Mount and al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, which helped ignite the second intifada (2000–5).⁴⁰

Adherents of the root causes theory argue that addressing the underlying causes of terrorism is essential for suppressing it on a long-term basis. Like adherents of other theories, they believe that the use of military force and other repressive instruments have a necessary role in combating terrorism, but the nature of the “engines” of terrorism (e.g., poverty, weak states, and demographic pressures) is more critical to rely on than the short-term use of military power.⁴¹ In this school of thought, relevant counterterrorism approaches include the promotion of economic development, the rule of law, good governance, education, and social justice more generally.⁴² Without such systemic approaches, adherents argue that counterterrorism becomes an exercise in “mowing the grass” rather than performing the “weeding and landscaping” aimed at reducing if not eliminating the threat.⁴³

State Sponsorship

As noted above, the boundaries between the five theories discussed in this article are blurry, and subscribing to one or more of them simultaneously is possible. Adherents of the *state sponsorship* framework do not necessarily rule out ideology, small-group dynamics, or rational choice as contributors to the phenomenon of terrorism. They seek, rather, to highlight the idea that terrorism is not always a nonstate phenomenon; regimes support terrorist groups for various *raisons d’état*. That assistance can be relatively passive (e.g., allowing

terrorists sanctuary or safe passage) or more active (e.g., providing direct financing, weapons, travel documents, or intelligence and propaganda support).⁴⁴

During the Cold War, U.S. leaders, such as President Ronald W. Reagan and his senior advisors, advanced the notion that the Soviet Union was the well-spring of international terror in the Middle East, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean.⁴⁵ Since 1979, the U.S. Department of State has designated state sponsors of terrorism. That list once included Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and North Korea—though interestingly, never the Soviet Union—but has dwindled to three—Iran, Syria, and Sudan.⁴⁶

The United States and its international partners apply a full spectrum of instruments—including unilateral and multilateral sanctions, capacity-building and foreign assistance programs, and intelligence and law enforcement cooperation—against countries they deem to be sponsors of terrorism.⁴⁷ Since the 1980s, the United States also has used military force against a variety of state sponsors—including Libya, Iraq, Sudan, and Afghanistan—to compel them to abandon terrorism, turn over terrorist suspects, and depose troublesome regimes as in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁴⁸

Rational Choice

Politicians and policy makers frequently use terms such as *senseless* and *mindless* to describe attacks by terrorists. The U.S. embassy in Kuwait decried the “senseless terrorist attack” on worshippers that took place on 26 June 2015 at the al-Imam Mosque in Kuwait City.⁴⁹ But within terrorism studies, the near-consensus is that terrorism is not the work of madmen but rather a rational, even if deplorable, strategic choice.⁵⁰ Neatly summarizing this theoretical stance, economists Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks explain, “The average terrorist behaves more or less as a *homo economicus*. . . . As rational actors terrorists act violently to maximize their utility, given certain benefits, costs and constraints that are linked to these actions. . . . The utility-maximizing level of terrorism is the level at which the marginal costs equal the marginal benefits of terrorism.”⁵¹

Although derived from microeconomics, this theory—at least in the way it is typically employed by terrorism specialists—offers explanations that are based on more than narrow considerations of monetary costs and benefits.⁵² In this paradigm, terrorism is instrumental and can be employed as a cost-effective strategy for broader political, religious, and social aims, as well as personal gain.⁵³

If terrorists are indeed rational actors, it follows that manipulating their cost-benefit calculations may be an effective tool for deterring terrorism. Toward that end, counterterrorism policies can be directed in two ways: raising the costs of terrorism or reducing the benefits, political or otherwise. Increasing

the cost could include both defensive measures, such as hardening potential targets, and offensive steps, such as direct military action or a no-concessions policy with respect to negotiations.⁵⁴ Reducing the benefits of terrorism could include granting concessions to aggrieved groups on whose behalf terrorists claim to be acting or by promoting democracy as a nonviolent forum for redressing political problems.⁵⁵

Group Dynamics

Although so-called lone wolves have been responsible for major acts of terrorism in North America and Western Europe, terrorism is fundamentally a group or social activity. Writing in 1968, one right-wing French extremist described the internal social demands of the terrorist underground in vivid terms: “Under the rigorous precautions of underground life, [the terrorist’s] only society is that of his brothers in arms. These ties are very strong, but they are limited to a handful of men who are bound together by danger and secrecy.”⁵⁶ Proponents of organizational or group dynamics approach terrorism by pointing to considerable theoretical and empirical evidence that argues individuals join and remain in violent underground groups to develop or maintain affective ties.⁵⁷ Scholars such as Marc Sageman have advanced the “bunch of guys” approach to explain the entry of young Western men into jihadist groups.⁵⁸ In the view of these theorists, radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization are better understood as collective rather than individual activities.⁵⁹

Given the collective nature of terrorism, organization—structure, internal dynamics, and leadership—is of paramount importance. In her studies of Italy’s Red Brigades and other European terrorists, sociologist Donatella Della Porta highlights the *totalitarian* nature of underground armed groups, where total commitment is required. According to Della Porta, “The very fact of being in an underground group requires commitment to it to become the absolute priority with respect to the other roles an individual plays.”⁶⁰ The group itself shapes the cognitive dynamics and perceptions of the outside world among its members by functioning as a filter—all external information is sorted and processed by the group.⁶¹

Law enforcement and intelligence operations designed to erode group cohesion have a prominent place in campaigns designed to counter terrorism at the organizational level. Such measures could include any of the following: direct action and targeted killings, the widespread use of informants, and repentance laws intended to encourage members to renounce violence and provide information in exchange for shorter prison sentences. Programs to counter violent extremism would have an obvious role, as would information operations intended to highlight the grim, dangerous, and futile nature of life inside a terrorist group. Given the importance of leadership, such operations could

also convey messages designed to undercut the authority and standing of senior figures—for example, criminal behavior for personal gain, sexual abuse of members, or deviation from the group’s stated goals.

Questions for Counterterrorism Assessment

With an understanding of the five theories of terrorism and their associated actions, the questions that must be answered to know whether each theory’s actions are having their intended effects will be developed. These questions were developed by reviewing the CT literature, discussing the theories with CNA’s subject-matter experts and using a reductionist approach to parse the theories’ CT actions into assessable components; however, no claim is made to have captured the universe of possible questions. This step of developing an assessment framework is inherently a blend of art and science; therefore, the questions we present below should be viewed as a starting point for further iteration by practitioners.

Ideology (Jihadism)

We identified four main actions for countering jihadist terrorism from the literature: using military force; countering extremist ideology; promoting the spread of democracy and human rights; and maintaining broad political coalitions. Below, we present sample assessment topics that we created for each action.

Using Military Force

To what extent have military operations degraded a terrorist group’s capabilities

- directly?
- indirectly?

To what extent can partner nations conduct military operations

- independently?
- assisted by the United States?

Countering Extremist Ideology

To what extent are terrorist, counterterrorist, and identified moderate groups’ messages comparatively able to

- reach target audiences?
- resonate with target audiences?
- lead the target audience to desired actions?
- compete in the messaging space with extremist groups?

Promoting Spread of Democracy and Human Rights⁶²

To what extent is the political community sovereign based on

- Participation

- Who is allowed to freely and fairly vote in an election?
- Who actually votes?
- Leadership
 - Who is eligible for public office?
 - Who attains public office?
- Legislature
 - Do officials reflect the population's characteristics?
 - To what extent is the body independent and empowered?
- Chief executive(s)
 - How is a chief executive selected?
 - How is he or she held accountable?
 - How independent, empowered, and effective is the judiciary?
- Culture
 - To what extent do political parties offer a variety of meaningful choices to voters?
 - To what extent are political decisions the product of public deliberation?
 - To what extent are media outlets independent, representative, and able to reach the citizenry?
 - To what extent is civil society independent and organized?
 - To what extent do citizens enjoy freedom
 - of speech?
 - from politically motivated persecution?
 - To what extent are subnational formal institutions and processes democratic in design and operation?

Maintaining Broad Political Coalitions

- What is the strength of the CT political coalition?
- How sensitive is the coalition to political conditions in each member country?

Root Causes

Five main promotion actions for countering root causes of terrorism were identified from the literature: economic development, rule of law, social justice, good governance, and education. Below, we present sample assessment topics that we created for each action.

Economic Development⁶³

What is the

- level of wealth?

- level of production?
- quality of life?
- level of employment?
- level of unemployment?

Rule of Law⁶⁴

To what extent are government powers limited and subject to the rule of law?

- How pervasive is corruption in the government?
- How well does the government assure the security of people and property?
- How well protected are basic, fundamental human rights?
- How open and transparent is the government?
- How effective is the government's enforcement of regulatory statutes?
- What is the level of access to civil, criminal, and informal or traditional justice systems?

Social Justice⁶⁵

How are the following distributed among the population based on

- wealth?
- goods and services?
- employment?

What is the level of access to

- health care?
- consumer information?
- education?

What is the level of participation in

- economy?
- society?
- civics?
- politics?

Good Governance⁶⁶

What is the level of

- citizens' voice?
- accountability for public officials?
- political instability?
- violence?
- government effectiveness?

- regulatory burden?
- rule of law?
- corruption?

Education

How educated is the population?

To what extent is education being provided by the following organizations in terms of

- state?
- private?
- religious?

State Sponsorship

Three main actions for countering state sponsorship of terrorism were identified from the literature: unilateral and multilateral sanctions, capacity-building and foreign assistance programs, and intelligence and law enforcement cooperation. Below, we present sample assessment topics that we created for each action.

Unilateral and Multilateral Sanctions

- Has the United States designated the country as a state sponsor of terrorism?
- What is the level of congressional support for unilateral sanctions?
- What is the level of international support for multilateral sanctions?
- What is the impact of sanctions to the economies of the
 - state sponsor?
 - United States?
 - partner nations?

Capacity-building and Foreign Assistance Programs

How capable are partner nations of securing themselves against terrorist threats emanating from the state sponsor?

What is the impact of U.S. security assistance to partner nations as it pertains to terrorism

- prevention?
- response?
- state-sponsorship?

Intelligence and Law Enforcement Cooperation

- Can intelligence and information pertaining to the actions of the state sponsor of terrorism be gathered?
- Have extradition agreements with partner nations been established?

- Have other mechanisms of effective law enforcement cooperation with partner nations been developed?

Rational Choice

Four main actions for the rational choice theory of CT were identified from the literature: raising the costs of terrorism for both hardening targets and offensive steps and reducing the benefits of both granting concessions to aggrieved groups and promoting democracy. Below, we present sample assessment topics that we created for each action.

Raising the Costs of Terrorism

Hardening Targets

- Have the strategic aims of the group and individuals been analyzed and understood?
- Do we understand the likely targets of terrorism from various groups and individuals?
- Have vulnerability assessments of at-risk countries been conducted or acted upon?

Offensive Steps

To what extent have

- military operations deterred the actions of terrorist groups?
- terrorist groups' revenue streams and funding sources been impacted?

Reducing the Benefits of Terrorism

Granting Concessions to Aggrieved Groups

To what extent and through which sociopolitical organizations are the grievances and desires of groups and individuals prone or susceptible to terrorism

- understood?
- addressed?
- supported?
- resolved?

Promoting Democracy

The questions pertaining to participation, leadership, and culture supporting sovereignty and political coalitions, which are presented with the spread of democracy under ideology also apply to promoting democracy.

Group Dynamics

Three main actions for the group dynamics theory of CT were identified from the literature: counternetwork actions; information operations; and countering

violent extremism. Below, we present sample assessment topics that we created for each action.

Counternetwork actions⁶⁷

To what extent have counternetwork actions

- caused members to inform on or renounce the group (through free will or inducement)?
- removed members from the group?
- affected recruitment of new group members?
- impacted the group's cohesion?
- impeded the group's communication abilities?
- degraded the group's critical skills and capabilities?

Information Operations

To what extent do

- group members respect and abide by the authority of the group's senior figures?
- former group members willingly speak out against the group?

Countering Violent Extremism

Among populations vulnerable being recruited or radicalized

- What is the view of the group?
- How do views vary within the demographics (e.g., gender, age, and social standing)?
- To what extent can the group communicate
 - ideologies?
 - beliefs?
 - goals?
 - results?
- To what extent can the vulnerable population communicate back to the group?
- To what extent are individuals providing support to the group
 - overtly?
 - covertly?

Indicators for Counterterrorism Assessment

The last step in deriving an assessment framework for the various theories of terrorism and their associated CT actions is to compile indicators that could be used to answer the assessment questions. As practitioners of assessment will quickly point out, this is the most difficult and often most contentious step when creating an assessment framework. In doing so, an assessor truly

works at the interface of policy and the effects of policy—the seam in which ideas, and potentially the individuals who originated them, are tested and held accountable.

For the sake of brevity in this article, one set of example indicators is presented for the ideology theory of terrorism, specifically with an emphasis on jihadism. Example indicators for the other theories can be found in the full version of this report.⁶⁸ As with the assessment questions, these indicators were largely generated by reviewing the literature, discussing the theories with CNA subject-matter experts, and using logical reasoning to further deconstruct the assessment questions into discernible bits. Invoking the same caveat as before, these indicators should be viewed as a place for practitioners to begin and continue the evolution.

The following actions, assessment questions, and associated indicators could be used for assessing progress in countering jihadist terrorism.

Using Military Force

To what extent have military operations *directly* degraded terrorist groups' capabilities based on the quantities or frequencies of such activities as

- attempted attacks?
- successful attacks?
- recruitment rates?
- attrition rates due to
 - death?
 - capture?
 - desertion?
- financing?
 - total
 - sources
- resupply capabilities?
 - ease of access
 - prices
 - means or routes
- tactics?

To what extent have military operations *indirectly* degraded terrorist groups' capabilities based on the frequencies, quantities, or strength of such activities as

- attempted attacks?
- successful attacks?
- thwarted attacks?
- abandoned attacks?
- leaked intelligence?

- popular support by demographic (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status)?

To what extent can partner nations and their subject matter experts assess the following military characteristics independently or with U.S. assistance?

- capabilities
- proficiencies
- deficiencies (gaps)
- force size
- structure
- posture
- performance

Countering Extremist Ideology

To what extent are terrorist, counterterrorist, and moderate groups' messages comparatively able to reach target audiences based on the frequency, quality, or quantity of the following:

- print media distribution?
- website views?
- social media linkages (e.g., Facebook friends, Twitter followers)?
 - groups
 - members
- chat rooms?
- other online fora?

To what extent do terrorist, counterterrorist, and moderate groups' messages comparatively resonate with target audiences based on the level of the following over time:

- popular support by demographic (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status)?
- audience consumption of media (e.g., reading or watching)?
- social media following?

To what extent are terrorist and counterterrorist groups' messages comparatively leading to desired actions by the target audience based on the quantity of the following:

- attempted attacks?
- successful attacks?
- recruitment rates?

Promoting Spread of Democracy and Human Rights

See the assessment questions listed above. Specific indicators that align with those questions have been identified by others.⁶⁹

Maintaining Broad Political Coalitions

What is the strength of the CT political coalition for each

- Number of involved
 - countries?
 - international organizations?
- Rate over time of members in the coalition
 - joining?
 - leaving?
- Level of coalition members' involvement or commitment over time based on
 - troops?
 - other personnel?
 - monetary support?
 - diplomatic support?
- How sensitive is the coalition to political conditions in each member country?
 - Number of elections or other political transitions of coalition members scheduled over time
 - Levels of
 - popular support of coalition members' political leadership
 - support for counter/antiterrorist policies from the
 - political party
 - population

Conclusion

In our experience, debates about whether the United States is successfully countering terrorism tend to focus on actions the U.S. government has taken and whether those actions by themselves have had their intended effects. Lost in those debates is the bigger picture of whether those actions are appropriate for the theories of terrorism/CT that are guiding policy or whether those theories are the “right” ones. In the absence of this bigger picture, assessments and specific indicators used as part of the debate are often ambiguous and ineffective for those trying to make decisions pertaining to the allocation of resources, designation of priorities, or communications to various audiences. We conclude that the failure of the United States to rigorously and effectively assess its CT actions to date is the result of the general absence of linkages between the theories of terrorism guiding U.S. policy and their associated CT

actions, the questions that need to be answered to assess those actions, and the indicators that need to be gathered and analyzed to answer those questions.

As a means of addressing this issue, we created a comprehensive assessment framework for each of the five predominant theories of terrorism and their associated actions for CT. To our knowledge, this is the first time such a comprehensive mapping of terrorism theories to CT indicators has been performed. As is likely apparent in this article, creating an assessment framework of this type is an inherently difficult exercise that requires a blend of art, science, and subject-matter expertise; therefore, we do not intend for the presented framework to be prescriptive nor do we believe it should be the final word on this subject.

So how then should this framework be used? In an ideal world, policy makers would choose the prominent theories of terrorism they believe are best, implement CT actions that align with those theories, and receive assessments of those actions that answer questions and provide supporting information (e.g., indicators) that are clearly and logically linked to their theories. Ultimately, those assessments might indicate that the chosen theory and its associated actions are not leading to desired results, at which time policy makers would have clear and compelling evidence for a change in policy and, therefore, actions.

Of course, we acknowledge that in the real world this ideal linkage of theory to assessment may not always be possible. Policy makers are often political actors, and may be reticent, consequently, to stake their political futures on a specific theory of terrorism/CT that may turn out to be less effective than others. In this instance, inferring the dominant theory being employed by policy makers in their policy guidance and using the rest of our assessment framework to tailor actions, assessment questions, and indicators appropriately to that theory may still be possible. If even this is not feasible, it may be incumbent upon senior implementers to question the ambiguity of the policy provided.

Ultimately, our hope is that the provided comprehensive mapping of terrorism theories to CT indicators will make it easier for policy makers to articulate, whether explicitly or implicitly, the theory of terrorism from which they derive CT programs and actions, and for CT practitioners to design an assessment framework that aligns logically to that theory. By providing an initial assessment framework for today's theories of terrorism/CT, we hope to empower policy makers to ask the right questions about countering terrorism and practitioners to answer them.

Notes

1. The history of U.S. counterterrorism actions extends back much further in time than post-9/11. See, for example, William Rosenau, *The "First War on Terrorism?" U.S. Domestic Counterterrorism During the 1970s and Early 1980s* (Arlington, VA: CNA, October 2014), https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/CRM-2014-U-008836.pdf.

2. Terms such as *assessment* and *evaluation* are used interchangeably throughout this article while acknowledging that different U.S. government agencies favor specific terms and may have definitions for them that vary somewhat from those of other agencies. See, for example, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2016), 17, or *Department of State Evaluation Policy* (Washington, DC: Department of State [DOS], 2015), 2.
3. See the discussion on the shortfalls of using security incidents as a metric in Jonathan J. Schroden, "Measures for Security in a Counterinsurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 5 (2009): 715–44, doi:10.1080/01402390903189394.
4. In the remainder of this article, we will emphasize the use of the term *indicator* as opposed to *metric* unless specifically referring to numerical indicators. Because the former carries a less quantitative connotation, it allows for the broader inclusion of nonnumerical pieces of data and information.
5. The selected approach to the questions has been effectively used by the lead author for assessing counterinsurgency operations in the past and aligns with recent changes in DOD doctrine. See Schroden, "Measures for Security"; Jonathan Schroden et al., "A New Paradigm for Assessment in Counterinsurgency," *Military Operations Research* 18, no. 3 (September 2013): 5–20, doi:10.5711/1082598318305; *Operation Assessment*, Joint Doctrine Note 1-15 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS], 2015), http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/notes/jdn1_15.pdf; and *Operation Assessment: Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Operation Assessment* (Eustis, VA: Air Land Sea Application Center, 2015).
6. Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, and Raven Korte, "The Impact of British Counterterrorist Strategies on Political Violence in Northern Ireland: Comparing Deterrence and Backlash Models," *Criminology* 47, no. 1 (2009): 17–45, doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.2009.00138.x.
7. Nadav Morag, "Measuring Success in Coping with Terrorism: The Israeli Case," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 28, no. 4 (2005): 307–20, doi:10.1080/10576100590950156.
8. Ibid., 308.
9. Michele L. Malvesti, "Bombing bin Laden: Assessing the Effectiveness of Air Strikes as a Counter-Terrorism Strategy," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 26, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2002): 17–29, <http://hdl.handle.net/10427/76927>.
10. Ibid.
11. Cynthia Lum, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison J. Sherley, *The Effectiveness of Counter-Terrorism Strategies: A Campbell Systematic Review* (Washington, DC: Crime and Justice Coordinating Group, Campbell Collaboration, 2006), 1–49.
12. Ibid., 4.
13. Teun van Dongen, *Break It Down: An Alternative Approach to Measuring Effectiveness in Counterterrorism* (Berlin: Economics of Security, 2009), <https://core.ac.uk/download/files/153/6518193.pdf>.
14. Ibid.
15. Teun Walter van Dongen, "The Science of Fighting Terrorism: The Relation between Terrorist Actor Type and Counterterrorism Effectiveness" (doctoral thesis, Leiden University, 2015), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/29742>.
16. Anthony Ellis et al., *Monitoring and Evaluation Tools for Counterterrorism Program Effectiveness* (Geneva: Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, 2011), http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/integrity_policybrief_1111.pdf.
17. Gentry White et al., "Modelling the Effectiveness of Counter-Terrorism Interventions," *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 475 (June 2014), <http://aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/461-480/tandi475.html>.
18. Ibid.
19. Edward F. Mickolus, "How Do We Know We're Winning the War against Terrorists? Issues in Measurement," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 25, no. 3 (2002): 151–60, doi:10.1080/01490380290073158.
20. Ibid.

21. Alex P. Schmid and Rashmi Singh, "Measuring Success and Failure in Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism: U.S. Government Metrics of the Global War on Terror," in *After the War on Terror: Regional and Multilateral Perspectives on Counter-Terrorism Strategy*, ed. Alex P. Schmid and Garry F. Hindle (London: Royal United Services Institute Books, 2009).
22. Harlan Ullman, "Is the US Winning or Losing the Global War on Terror and How Do We Know?," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 1 (2006): 29–41, doi:10.1080/10357710500494416.
23. Daniel L. Byman, "Are We Winning the War on Terrorism?," Brookings, 23 May 2003, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2003/05/23middleeast-byman>; Daniel Byman, "Measuring the War on Terrorism: A First Appraisal," *Current History* 102, no. 668 (December 2003): 411–15; Daniel Byman, "Scoring the War on Terrorism," *National Interest* (Summer 2003): 75–84, <http://nationalinterest.org/article/scoring-the-war-on-terrorism-397>; and Daniel Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008).
24. Byman, "Are We Winning"; Byman, "Measuring the War"; Byman, "Scoring the War"; and Byman, *The Five Front War*.
25. Michael Stohl, "Winners and Losers in the War on Terror: The Problem of Metrics," in *Coping with Terrorism: Origins, Escalation, Counterstrategies, and Responses*, ed. Rafael Rueveny and William R. Thompson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 350.
26. Alexander Spencer, *The Problems of Evaluating Counter-Terrorism* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006), https://epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/13771/1/UNISCI_Spencer12.pdf.
27. Eric van Um and Daniela Pisoiu, *Effective Counterterrorism: What Have We Learned So Far?* (Berlin: Economics of Security, 2011), http://www.diw.de/documents/publikationen/73/diw_01.c.386651.de/diw_econsec0055.pdf.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ivan Sascha Sheehan, *When Terrorism and Counterterrorism Clash: The War on Terror and the Transformation of Terrorist Activity* (Youngstown, NY: Cambria Press, 2007), 44–45; and Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970). Early terrorism research focused heavily on identifying terrorist "personalities." Today, few specialists argue that such personalities exist, although some experts continue to search for a terrorist "profile" in the hopes of explaining why relatively few individuals from the same background living in similar circumstances become terrorists. John Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 618, no. 1 (July 2008): 83, doi:10.1177/0002716208317539.
31. More than 20 years ago, political scientist Samuel P. Huntington popularized the notion that the "West and the rest" (including Islam) were destined for intercivilizational conflicts. Samuel P. Huntington, "A Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993), doi:10.2307/20045621.
32. Paul Berman, "Why Is the Islamist Death Cult So Appealing?," *Tablet*, 28 January 2015, <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/188549/islamist-death-cult>. See also Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004).
33. "Jihadism as an Ideology of Violence: The Abuse of Islam for Terrorist Purposes," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 15 June 2015, <http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/en/fields-of-work/islamism-and-islamist-terrorism/what-is-islamism/jihadism-as-an-ideology-of-violence>. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as the Islamic State, adds an apocalyptic dimension to jihadism—the return of the Caliphate and with it, the destruction of the world. See William McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015).
34. David Frum and Richard Perle, *An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror* (New York: Random House, 2003), 238. See also Timothy J. Lynch, "Kristol Balls: Neocon-

- servative Visions of Islam and the Middle East,” *International Politics* 45, no. 2 (March 2008): 192, doi:10.1057/palgrave.ip.8800227.
35. John M. Owen IV, *Confronting Political Islam: Six Lessons from the West's Past* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 72.
 36. For more on the purported demonstration effect of the application of U.S. military power, see James Phillips, “Iraq: One Year Later,” Heritage Foundation, 24 March 2004, <http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/hl825nbsp-iraq-one-year-later>.
 37. Jim Acosta, “Obama Calls on World to Focus on Roots of ISIS, al Qaeda Extremism,” CNN News, 19 February 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/02/19/politics/obama-isis-extremism-speech/index.html>. See also *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: White House, July 2011), https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism_strategy.pdf.
 38. Edward Newman, “Exploring the ‘Root Causes’ of Terrorism,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 8 (2006): 751, doi:10.1080/10576100600704069.
 39. Ibid.; and Tore Bjørgo, “Introduction,” in *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward*, ed. Tore Bjørgo (New York: Routledge, 2005), 3.
 40. Bjørgo, “Introduction,” in *Root Causes*.
 41. See, for example, Martha Crenshaw, “The Long View of Terrorism,” *Current History* 113, no. 759 (January 2014): 42.
 42. Alex P. Schmid, “Prevention of Terrorism: Towards a Multi-Pronged Approach,” in Bjørgo, *Root Causes*, 223.
 43. Fareed Zakaria, “Fmr CIA Director Hayden ‘We’re Going to See More of What We Saw in Texas Last Week,’” *CNN Press Room* (blog), CNN News, 10 May 2015, <http://cnnpressroom.blogs.cnn.com/2015/05/10/fmr-cia-director-hayden-were-going-to-see-more-of-what-we-saw-in-texas-last-week/>; and Daniel Byman, “Mowing the Grass and Taking Out the Trash,” *Foreign Policy*, 25 August 2014, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/25/mowing-the-grass-and-taking-out-the-trash/>.
 44. Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15. Before the emergence of modern terrorism in the late 1960s, scholars generally used the term *terrorism* to denote specific forms of violence carried out by states against noncombatants to *terrorize* them into obedience (e.g., France during the Revolution, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin). Hannah Arendt, “Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government,” *Review of Politics* 15, no. 3 (July 1953): 303–27.
 45. Policy makers embraced the ideas advanced in journalist Claire Sterling’s book in which she detected Moscow’s hand behind terrorist groups in the Middle East and Western Europe—in effect, the existence of a Soviet proxy war against the United States and its allies. See Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981).
 46. “State Sponsors of Terrorism,” DOS, 20 July 2015, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/c14151.htm>.
 47. “Programs and Initiatives,” DOS, 5 July 2015, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/programs/index.htm>.
 48. Martha Crenshaw, “Coercive Diplomacy and the Response to Terrorism,” in *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, ed. Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2003).
 49. “Embassy of the United States Condemns the Senseless Terrorist Attack on Worshipers,” DOS, 26 June 2015, http://kuwait.usembassy.gov/embassy_news/press-releases/2015-press-releases/-embassy-of-the-united-states-condemns-the-senseless-terrorist-attack-on-worshippers-june-26-2015.html.
 50. See, for example, Bruce Hoffman, “The Rationality of Terrorism and Other Forms of Political Violence: Lessons from the Jewish Campaign in Palestine, 1939–1947,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 2 (2011), doi:10.1080/09592318.2011.573394.
 51. Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks, “What Causes Terrorism?,” *Public Choice* 147, no. 1/2 (April 2011): 4–5, doi:10.1007/s11127-010-9601-1.

52. Claude Berrebi, "The Economics of Terrorism and Counterterrorism: What Matters and Is Rational-Choice Theory Helpful?," in *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*, ed. Paul K. Davis and Kim Cragin (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2009), 151.
53. Lawrence A. Kuznar, "Rationality Wars and the War on Terror: Explaining Terrorism and Social Unrest," *American Anthropologist* 109, no. 2 (June 2007): 320, doi:10.1525/AA.2007.109.2.318.
54. Eric van Um, *Discussing Concepts of Terrorist Rationality: Implications for Counter-Terrorism Policy* (Berlin: Economics of Security, 2009), 40.
55. James A. Piazza, "Draining the Swamp: Democracy Promotion, State Failure, and Terrorism in 19 Middle Eastern Countries," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, no. 6 (2007): 521–39, doi:10.1080/10576100701329576.
56. Quoted in William F. May, "Terrorism as Strategy and Ecstasy," *Social Research* 41, no. 2 (Summer 1974): 291. See also Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1969), 89.
57. Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 94.
58. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
59. In the group dynamics view, terrorist organizations have much in common with other deviant groups, particularly juvenile gangs. Simon Cottee, "Jihadism as a Subcultural Response to Social Strain: Extending Marc Sageman's 'Bunch of Guys' Thesis," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23, no. 5 (2011): 730, doi:10.1080/09546553.2011.611840.
60. Donatella Della Porta, "Leaving Underground Organizations: A Sociological Analysis of the Italian Case," in *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, ed. Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2009), 75.
61. Donatella Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 179.
62. The assessment questions for this action are directed at the level of specific "countries of concern" and are taken or derived from Michael Coppedge et al., "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach," *Perspectives on Politics* 9, no. 2 (June 2011): 247–67, doi:10.1017/S1537592711000880; and Seva Gunitsky, "How Do You Measure 'Democracy'?", *Monkey Cage* (blog), *Washington Post*, 23 June 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/06/23/how-do-you-measure-democracy/>.
63. The assessment questions for economic development actions, as well as for those pertaining to promotion of social justice, good governance, and education, are directed at specific countries of concern.
64. Assessment questions for rule of law are derived or taken from Juan Carlos Botero and Alejandro Ponce, *Measuring the Rule of Law* (Washington, DC: World Justice Project, 2011), doi:10.2139/ssrn.1966257.
65. Assessment questions for social justice actions were derived from the European Union (EU) Social Justice Index. See Daniel Schraad-Tischler and Christian Kroll, "Social Justice Index: 'Social Justice in the EU—A Cross-National Comparison'," *Social Inclusion Monitor*, 9 November 2015, <http://www.social-inclusion-monitor.eu/social-justice-index>.
66. Assessment questions for good governance were derived from Aart Kraay, Pablo Zoido-Lobaton, and Daniel Kaufmann, *Governance Matters* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1999).
67. Counternetwork actions include such activities as direct action and targeted killings, use of informants, and repentance laws.
68. Jonathan Schroden, William Rosenau, and Emily Warner, *Asking the Right Questions: A Framework for Assessing Counterterrorism Actions* (Arlington, VA: CNA, 2016), https://www.cna.org/cna_files/pdf/DRM-2015-U-012261-Final.pdf.
69. The V-Dem project includes nearly 400 indicators as part of an aggregate index of democracy (with disaggregates available). See "Varieties of Democracy: Global Standards, Local Knowledge," V-Dem, 12 July 2016, www.v-dem.net.